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4 July 2019

Mrs Julie Turvey  
Executive Headteacher  
Hounslow School  
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Dear Mrs Turvey

### **No formal designation inspection of Hounslow School**

Following my visit with Colin Lankester, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 19 June 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This monitoring inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for inspecting schools with no formal designation. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector wanted to review the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements, following two bereavements in 2018.

### **Evidence**

Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. Inspectors also reviewed the school's website and a range of information provided by leaders, including a self-evaluation document and the school development plan. Meetings were held with the executive and associate headteachers as well as with leaders responsible for various aspects of the school's work relating to safeguarding. Inspectors met with groups of pupils and also spoke to pupils informally during the day. Phone calls were held with two representatives of the local authority, and with representatives of two charities that support vulnerable pupils. An inspector spoke on the telephone with the headteacher of an alternative provision attended by a small number of pupils from the school. The lead inspector met the chair of governors and two members of the governing body.

Having considered the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

Safeguarding is effective.

### **Context**

Hounslow School is larger than the average-sized secondary school and converted to academy status in 2011. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much lower than that found nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or with an education, health and care plan is below the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below that found nationally. There is a higher than average proportion of children who are looked after. The school has a relatively low turnover of staff, but leaders are ever mindful of the need to recruit and retain teachers, particularly in those subjects where there are difficulties nationally in recruitment. Consequently, the school works with three local providers of initial teacher training to offer places for trainee teachers.

### **Inspection findings**

Pupils' welfare and well-being have the highest priority. Leaders and governors continually seek to improve safeguarding, acting swiftly when opportunities arise to enhance the provision. They have worked tirelessly to create a culture in which it is 'good to talk' and which supports the safety and personal development both of staff and of pupils. Governors provide thoughtful and rigorous oversight of safeguarding. They check that policies and processes are followed and hold leaders stringently to account for the impact of their work with vulnerable pupils.

Parents and carers have confidence in the school's safeguarding arrangements. Almost all of those who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, agree or strongly agree that their children feel safe in school. Parental surveys conducted by leaders over the past year suggest that parents consistently say that the school keeps their children safe.

Statutory checks on the suitability of all who work or volunteer in the school are carried out diligently. Leaders with responsibility for child protection have undertaken appropriate training. All staff, whether in teaching or support roles, benefit from regularly updated training in safeguarding. They are constantly vigilant and understand the importance of referring promptly any concerns they have to the school's designated safeguarding lead. Procedures for reporting concerns and for whistleblowing are well established and understood by all staff.

Where a child protection concern merits further action, the designated safeguarding lead works closely and tenaciously with external agencies to ensure that support for pupils and their families is timely and effective. Records are detailed and

meticulous. In the event of any safeguarding concerns about a member of staff, governors and leaders follow correct procedures and take appropriate advice from the local authority designated officer.

Pupils say that they feel safe and understand how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils are confident in speaking to staff if they are worried about anything or if they have concerns about a friend. They confirm that they have lessons and talks from visiting speakers about issues such as drugs and alcohol, emotional well-being and sexual health. However, although pupils have a sound knowledge of the main risks to their safety, their understanding of extremism and radicalisation is less secure.

Pupils believe that bullying is infrequent, and that staff are effective in dealing with it on the rare occasions that it does occur. Some pupils expressed concerns about bullying that takes place out of school on social media. In lessons and around the school, pupils behave well, wear their uniforms with pride and show consideration for others, for example by holding doors open for adults and each other. The atmosphere at breaktimes and lunchtimes is calm and orderly.

Leaders responsible for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) have a clear understanding of the particular risks faced by pupils in the locality. Consequently, the topics covered are relevant to pupils' lives. The PSHCE curriculum is complemented well by assemblies and special themed days, such as a recent one on empathy.

Relationships between teachers and pupils are cordial. Pupils try their hardest, take pride in their work and answer challenging questions confidently. Vulnerable pupils are known to all staff and are well supported in their learning. As a result, disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND do well and make strong progress from their starting points.

Governors and leaders have invested significant time and resources into supporting pupils' well-being. Pupils are encouraged to look out for each other and to improve their emotional resilience. The 'mind to be kind' campaign encourages pupils to develop awareness of others' needs. In addition, through the curriculum, in assemblies and in displays all around the school, pupils are supported in identifying ways to reduce their levels of anxiety.

Leaders with responsibility for year groups recognise that the school's pastoral arrangements are a vital bridge between school and home. Form tutors are in a good position to notice subtle changes in a pupil's behaviour and/or attendance that could signify a safeguarding issue. Leaders are relentless in the challenge and support they provide to the families of pupils whose rates of attendance are too low. Overall attendance in the school is broadly similar to that of secondary schools nationally. However, thanks to leaders' effective work, rates of persistent absence, including for disadvantaged pupils, are lower than average.

Leaders evaluate the impact of their actions carefully to ensure that funding, in particular funding for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, is spent wisely. Governors do not shy away from challenging leaders to be even more rigorous in their analyses of which approaches are most effective.

The appointment this year of a leader for emotional well-being has helped to bring greater coherence to the school's work with its most vulnerable pupils. The emotional-well-being leader, designated safeguarding officer and special educational needs coordinator share information effectively to identify those at greatest risk. Pupils with social and emotional difficulties are offered a range of therapies, including dog therapy and counselling. Pupils speak very highly of the impact of these approaches. In particular, pupils who have regular sessions with 'Mr Digby the dog' acknowledge the calming effect that playing with and caring for the dog has on their state of mind. Consequently, some of the barriers to vulnerable pupils' learning are removed, enabling them to focus on their schoolwork and make stronger academic progress.

### **External support**

Leaders have established strong and effective links with several local and national charities that provide counselling services and other forms of therapy. These providers speak highly of the commitment of leaders to ensure that they are doing the best they can for pupils, and praise them for their proactive approach to meeting pupils' mental health needs.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Leaders should ensure that pupils have a clearer awareness of the potential risks to their own safety from radicalisation and extremism.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Hampshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Gary Holden  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**